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# The Swiss Observer

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Jaquet-Droz in Geneva and London was continued by Leschot and known as Jaquet-Droz and Leschot. It was a well-known name in the trade and produced many fine pieces which can be seen in collections all over the world.

The Guinness Book of Records indicates that the first *wrist watch* was made by Jaquet-Droz and Leschot in 1790.

The origin of the self-winding watch is rather obscure. German watch-makers are believed to have built isolated models in the early eighteenth century. The first self-winding watches of which there are definite records were made by the Swiss Abraham-Louis Breguet, somewhere between 1750 and 1760. The latter's self-winding devices were called "*pedometers*" and were powered by the vertical movements of walking. Jaquet-Droz made a few pedometer watches as from about 1780, but centred his production on the items which had made his reputation, namely singing-bird boxes, puppets, sumptuous watches and Neuchâtel clocks. The wrist watch made in 1790 was an isolated specimen. Wrist watches only became popular after the First World War.

## Branching off to London

The major market for the articles of the firm Jaquet-Droz was England, and indirectly the Near and Far East. This is why a branch was opened in London in 1783 under the direction of Henry Maillardet, one of Jaquet-Droz's best craftsmen. The watches were exported to the Far East, particularly China through the East India Company. London at that time was the centre of the watchmaking industry.

Pierre Jaquet-Droz was an intellectual turned inventor and craftsman. He was opened to the enlightened ideas

of the 18th century, remaining all the while attached to the teaching of the church. The church authorities of Neuchâtel of his day were rigorously Calvinistic and anti-liberal, as Jean-Jacques Rousseau had the opportunity to discover for himself.

When Jaquet-Droz's friend, the pastor Fernand Olivier Petitpierre, proclaimed from his pulpit in the church of Les Ponts-de-Martel that the fires of Hell were not eternal because the love of God would one day redeem the worst sinners, the pastors of Neuchâtel denounced him as a heretic, and summoned him to recant his ideas. As he refused he was banished from his church in the midst of considerable controversy. He left for London, where he taught theology. Although his views were accepted by the two enemies, Rousseau and Voltaire, by the Governor of the Principality of Neuchâtel, Lord Keith and by the State Council, the assembly of pastors had their way. Jaquet-Droz supported him to the extent of organising a demonstration in the church of La Chaux-de-Fonds.

Jaquet-Droz, Daniel Jean Richard, Abraham Louis-Perrelet, these are some of the great names in the history of the Swiss watch industry. The industrial organisation of this vital source of prosperity sprang from the country workshops which their genius helped to create. Little did they know that their pioneering work would one day promote Switzerland to the world leadership in the field of watchmaking, and produce, as it did last year, 46 per cent of all the watches made in the world.

## Jaquet-Droz watches today

There are *Jaquet-Droz watches* marketed all over the world today. However, they are not related in any way to the firm founded by Pierre Jaquet-Droz, his son and Leschot. *Jaquet-Droz* is the actual trade mark of the watches manufactured by a group of 150 small firms who have joined forces in one single trading organisation, the *Société Anonyme de Fabricants d'Horlogerie*. This large-scale co-operation was prompted by the need of collective bargaining with the main supplier of movement components of the industry, *Ebauches S.A.*

The small watch firm—say, the factory with 30 workers producing a few thousand watches a year—found that it was being treated as a second class customer by *Ebauches S.A.* and getting its components with delayed deliveries and at higher costs than the competing big firms. For *Ebauches S.A.*, it was commercially more expedient to satisfy the large customers first, plants like Lenco and Omega, which would place orders for millions of components. They could necessarily be served at lower prices than the individual firms asking for small job lots.

These small firms therefore decided to concert their buying (and later their marketing, testing, research and their more onerous investments) and became *Ebauches*' biggest customer. All the watches made by the independent companies of the *Société Anonyme de Fabricants d'Horlogerie* are sold abroad with the stamp *Jaquet-Droz*. It was as good a trade name as any other and certainly a good service to the memory of a great genius of horological history.

(PMB)

# COMMENT

## HOW SHOULD TEACHING BE UNDERSTOOD

It may be an exaggeration to talk of a "crisis" in the Swiss universities. Nevertheless these holidays come as a cooling-off period after a number of incidents which have hardly helped to improve the relations between teaching staff and students at Geneva, Lausanne and Zurich Universities. The worst cases happened in Zurich.

The president of the Federal Institute of Technology, Professor Hauri, was practically stormed in his office on 24th June by 80 architecture students requiring immediate changes in the teaching programme and demanding explanations as to why the contract of six lecturers who had been experimentally hired for a year to teach architecture from a new angle had not been renewed. A month later a psychiatry lecturer, Mr. Rothschild, who was found guilty of lending political and moral overtones to his teachings, was given notice of the end of his teaching contract at the end of the summer semester. The official motive given was that he had behaved in an undignified way by taking part in a street theatre show. This caused agitation in the university, made worse by the closure of the main building while an "Anti-Capitalist Week" was in full swing.

Ironically enough, Mr. Rothschild was presiding at the sittings of this symposium of dissent, which was held in the *Auditorium Maximum*. The rectorate allowed this event to take place after having received promises from the revolutionary students that they would not interfere with the normal running of the university and regular lectures.

The university was closed as a result of various complaints. It appears that right-wing students had torn down the flags and streamers in the *Auditorium Maximum* and this, alleged the organisers of the anti-capitalist conference, was used as a pretext by the authorities.

In Geneva, there were demonstrations by architecture students against the appointment of two professors and

the way they were chosen. Finally, in Lausanne, an enquiry was opened on four professors who had added their signatures to a petition signed by 450 students demanding the introduction of a course on Marxist economy in the curriculum.

The Swiss Union of Students reacted to the events in Zurich by publishing a high-handed statement that the right of expression was a "complete illusion" in Swiss higher educational establishments and that their rectorates were doing everything, by sacking lecturers, closing premises, refusing student confrontation, not renewing teaching contracts, to prevent a fresh wind from entering in the university and preparing students for the conditions of the modern world. Professor Hauri reacted by saying that the Institute of Technology was "not a political establishment".

This expressed the crux of the matter. Traditionally, the "Poly" was there to teach students in architecture how to build a house that would hold together and how to plan a town which would be habitable from an operational point of view. Likewise, an economics lecturer was expected to introduce the complex mechanisms of human exchanges to his class, including both Marxism and capitalism for an objective presentation. The statutes of Lausanne University prohibited the existence of a special course on Marxist Economy, and this regulation seems rather anachronistic.

But the rift in thinking between the majority of professors and students remains complete: The former just want to impart a *technical knowledge* (which will help to build houses, manage a business or cure a neurotic person, as in the case of psychiatry) their audience remaining free to apply their personal philosophy in their jobs once they have passed their exams; the latter insist that the teaching they get should be geared to their conceptions of a just society. Architecture, economics and psychiatry have their full meaning only when the present realities of their fields of application are taken into account.

The shape of a house will depend on an understanding of man and society, and it is just this understanding which the dissenting students of today are demanding from their teachers. In other words, the renovation of society should begin in the universities. The professors counter by saying that this notion conflicts with academic objectivity—and the students taunt their objectivity as an expression of slavery to the established order.

Should a lecturer be allowed to profess his own ideas or should he be coldly objective? Should students be taught what they *want* to hear? Is the University really slanting in one, traditional direction and preventing students being told the other aspects of truth? If so, is it wrong? Should professors and students form an intellectual com-

munity standing on equal footing? These are the questions and divergences feeding university unrest. It is clear that many old regulations have to be changed and it is indeed possible that the teaching corps are hardening in their traditional outlook in plain reaction to students demands.

(PMB)

## SWISS NEWS

### HOW DO SWISS FIRMS VIEW ENTRY IN THE COMMON MARKET?

The *Vorort* of the Union of Swiss Trade and Industry has published a 260-page document presenting the results of an extensive enquiry into the opinion of Swiss business towards a possible entry or association of Switzerland with the Common Market.

Its general conclusions are that the Swiss economy wants a free market for industrial goods in Western Europe as well as for certain services, such as patents and insurance. But a great price remains attached to the safeguard of Switzerland's monetary, financial and economic independence. Swiss business is for the maintenance of neutrality and the traditional political structure, such as direct democracy and federalism.

A certain degree of Swiss participation unpledged by institutional ties is however considered as desirable. An agreement with the European Community should be put into effect following a short transition period, to be expanded in the course of time. Switzerland should never cease during these negotiations to develop her presence on the world markets. The special status sought by Switzerland with the European Community is considered to be realisable and should fall within the framework of the policy declarations of the Federal Council of 10th November, 1970. A minority of companies advocated complete entry into Europe, but most firms are satisfied with the status quo while at the same time being well aware of the consequences of commercial isolation.

The opening of trade barriers in industrial goods will harshen competition considerably and will make business particularly difficult for the Swiss foodstuff industry owing to the fact that Switzerland cannot rally to a common agricultural policy. The report points out that numerous undertakings have already established their European contacts and do not consider European integration as something indispensable for their business. The solution preferred by most businessmen, which is also the least committal, is to have regular negotiations with the European Community on specific points when the need arises.

### A WOMAN MINISTER IS SOCIALIST CANDIDATE AT THE FEDERAL ELECTIONS

With their newly acquired rights to take part in votes on federal matters, one can expect a number of female candidates to present themselves at the October federal elections.

One such candidate, and maybe the first in history, is a woman minister. The Social Democrat Party of Saint Gall are intending to present Frau Pfarrer Hanna Sahfeld-Sinner, from Altstätten, as their candidate to the National Council. But it remains to be seen whether such an election is permissible, for, according to the 75th Article of the Constitution, only lay Swiss citizens are entitled to sit at the National Council. Mrs. Sahfeld hasn't actually got a parish, but she is ordained and helps her minister husband in his pastoral work. If the 75th Article of the Constitution can be made as elastic as the Confessional Articles 51 and 52, then there should be few objections to her candidature.

The Swiss Evangelical Press Service was quick to point out that a national councillor had recently obtained the privilege of presiding at a religious service as a layman. This obviously didn't mean that a politician had thereby entered the ministry and was no longer a layman. The Swiss Evangelical Press Service maintained that this could be considered as a precedent. It also pointed out that ordination didn't necessarily mean entrance to the *Geistlichen Stand* referred to in the Constitution. To make matters constitutionally easier, Mrs. Sahfeld has announced that she would abandon any pastoral activities while in political office.

### THE OUTSPOKEN BRAZILIAN BISHOP

Dom Helder Camarra, the fiery left-wing Archbishop of Recife, Brazil, made a speech to the people of Zurich assembled on Helvetiaplatz, which the officials of the federal public ministry could hardly have appreciated. He questioned the value of neutrality towards good and bad, hinting that it could be a cosy rampart against the poverty of the world. He criticised the large Swiss banks, guilty of sheltering money earned off the sweat of the masses in the developing countries. In speaking in this way, the archbishop was taking a risk of falling under a federal decree of 1948 which forbids non-residing foreigners from making political statements, and in particular from interfering with national affairs, without a special authorisation. His speech was still being examined by the public ministry by the time he left for Brazil. But the next time he comes to Switzerland, Dom Camarra will most probably be asked not to make any political speeches, with a warning of extradition if he does not comply.